



BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR MOTOR VEHICLE RECYCLERS



VEHICLE REFRIGERANTS

Refrigerants used in vehicle air conditioners, including R-12 (Freon) used in older cars and R-134a used in newer cars, harm the earth's atmosphere when they escape into the air. R-12 belongs to a family of chemicals known as chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). CFCs rise into the upper atmosphere where they destroy the ozone layer that protects the earth from high-energy ultraviolet radiation. Increased exposure to this radiation raises the risk of skin cancer and damages

plants and animals. R-134a belongs to a family of chemicals known as hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) and is also known as a "greenhouse gas" because it contributes to global climate change.

DID YOU KNOW?

- ✓ Skin cancer is one of the fastest growing forms of cancer. In the US, one person dies of skin cancer every hour.
- ✓ Freon can only be sold to certified technicians or to certified reclamation facilities that will reclaim it to its original purity specifications.
- ✓ Although manufacturers were required to stop producing Freon by the end of 1995, they can continue to use it until existing supplies are depleted.

It is important to manage refrigerants from end-of-life vehicles in a way that protects the environment. In fact, it is illegal to vent *any* refrigerant to the atmosphere. Instead, motor vehicle recyclers must evacuate refrigerants from end-of-life vehicles using equipment that meets the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) requirements.

In addition, refrigerants recovered from end-of-life vehicles must be stored in approved tanks, and shipped back to the manufacturer or an approved off-site reclamation facility, or used to recharge other vehicle air conditioning units.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

- ▶ Before crushing vehicles, remove the refrigerants using labeled recycling / recovery equipment that meets EPA requirements. Provide a signed written statement to the crusher operator verifying the refrigerant has been removed as required.
- ▶ Do not vent refrigerants or allow them to evaporate to the atmosphere.
- ▶ Do not mix different types of refrigerants.
- ▶ Store refrigerants in tanks that meet U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) or Underwriters Laboratories (UL) standards.

- ▶ Label the tanks “REFRIGERANTS” and include the type, for example “R-12” or “R-134a.”
- ▶ Label empty tanks “EMPTY.”
- ▶ Write “EVACUATED” on each vehicle air conditioning unit when it is evacuated. Include the evacuation date for reference.
- ▶ Recycle refrigerant by using it at your salvage yard to recharge operating vehicle air conditioners or send it off-site to an EPA-certified technician for the same use. Alternatively, send it back to the manufacturer or to a reclamation facility that meets EPA standards.
- ▶ Keep all refrigerant purchase, sale, on-site recycling, and reclamation records for at least three years. Records of off-site reclamation should include the volume and final destination.
- ▶ Certify to EPA that you are using equipment that meets EPA standards. To obtain the appropriate certification form, call the EPA Stratospheric Ozone Information Hotline (1-800-296-1996).
- ▶ Do not use automobile air-conditioning recovery equipment to recover refrigerant from appliances. Appliances require a different type of recovery system.
- ▶ Do not use compressed air to test R-134a equipment. Some mixtures of air and R-134a are combustible at high pressure.
- ▶ If a customer buys a second-hand air conditioning system that uses R-12, suggest having the system retrofitted to use the preferred alternative, R-134a.
- ▶ For more information about managing refrigerants, call the EPA Stratospheric Ozone Information Hotline at 1-800-296-1996.

This guide sheet provides general guidance only.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, CONTACT:



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